

ACTS 22 PAULS TESTIMONY

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“Brothers and fathers, listen now to my defense.”

2 When they heard him speak to them in Aramaic, they became very quiet. Then Paul said:

3 “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I studied under Gamaliel and was thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors. I was just as zealous for God as any of you are today.

4 I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison,

5 as the high priest and all the Council can themselves testify. I even obtained letters from them to their associates in Damascus, and went there to bring these people as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished.

***6 “About noon as I came near Damascus,
suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed
around me. 7 I fell to the ground and heard a
voice say to me, ‘Saul! Saul! Why do you
persecute me?’***

8 “‘Who are you, Lord?’ I asked.

“ ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting,’ he replied. 9 My companions saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who was speaking to me.

10 “‘What shall I do, Lord?’ I asked.

“ ‘Get up,’ the Lord said, ‘and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do.’ 11 My companions led me by the hand into Damascus, because the brilliance of the light had blinded me.

12 “A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there. 13 He stood beside me and said, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight!’ And at that very moment I was able to see him.

14 “Then he said: ‘The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. 15 You will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard. 16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.’

17 “When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance 18 and saw the Lord speaking to me. ‘Quick!’ he said. ‘Leave Jerusalem immediately, because the people here will not accept your testimony about me.’

19 “‘Lord,’ I replied, ‘these people know that I went from one synagogue to another to imprison and beat those who believe in you. 20 And when the blood of your martyr[a] Stephen was shed, I stood there giving my approval and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.’

21 “Then the Lord said to me, ‘Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles.’ ”

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In a moment of intense adversity, Paul stands before a hostile crowd, ready to present his defense. Having been wrongfully accused and surrounded by turmoil, he maintains an extraordinary calmness and composure, addressing his audience with a respectful tone that underscores his deep connection to them. His use of the Aramaic language captures their attention and conveys his authenticity as one of them.

The Jewish religious leaders want to kill Paul!

So Paul is trying to reason with them as he is being protected by the Romans, even though Paul's testimony is very impressive the religious leaders don't want to hear it

22 The crowd listened to Paul until he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, “Rid the earth of him! He’s not fit to live!”

23 As they were shouting and throwing off their cloaks and flinging dust into the air,

Paul made it clear that it wasn't his idea to preach to the Gentiles; this was God's plan, not his. He hoped it also explained to the crowd why he seemed so friendly to the Gentiles: Paul was simply obeying Jesus and His word to him.

And they listened to him until this word, and then they raised their voices and said, “Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live!” Then, as they cried out and tore off their clothes and threw dust into the air.

When I go to bed I turn on bible gateway audio so it is playing all night long, and when I wake up in the morning Paul's testimony is usually playing, and I think about how impressive his testimony is! We all have testimonies or else we wouldn't be in church this morning!

***As I listen to these verses most every morninged,
I think about people that don't want to hear
about Jesus, John 3:18 says that they are
condemned already, I think Paul was deeply hurt
because these were his friends that he had
worked with, studied with***

***Think about how Paul had sacrificed for
spreading the Love of Jesus, to be rejected by his
closest friends***

Philippians 1:29

29 For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him,

We all have had friends and family that have rejected us, it is one of the things that we don't think about when we come to Jesus!

We are told in the bible that we will suffer for Jesus, and rejection leaves some pretty deep scars

The point of this message is what do we do with the scars of rejection?

One option is turning our backs to Jesus and going back to the old self, and there have been many that have done just that!

***Option two is turning our backs on our friends
and family, just walk away!***

Option three is tough! Living the life that Jesus wants you to live! Setting the standard of love, joy, and peace,, praying for those that rejected you

Even Jesus was rejected by his own family and friends, rejection is going to come the question is what are we going to do about it